

Salvation According to Scripture

Entering the New Covenant

By

John

Servant and witness of Christ
Zion's Roar Holy Spirit Ministry
Bixby, Oklahoma



Book 2- Chapter 03 – Study 07

***Enduring to the End: Salvation Maintained
by Faithfulness***

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Email: www@zionsroar.org

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we continue our journey through the Scriptures, there are certain subjects that many believers quietly avoid. They are not avoided because the Bible is silent, but because they touch the deepest struggles of the human heart. Suffering, despair, discouragement, temptation, weariness, and perseverance are among those subjects.

The Scriptures never promise that the path of faith will be free from hardship. On the contrary, they repeatedly remind us that those who belong to God will experience trials, afflictions, persecutions, disappointments, sicknesses, chronic pain, weakness, heartache, and moments when the burden seems almost more than we can bear. Yet through every page of Scripture, one message remains constant:

Do not give up.

The call of God has never been merely to begin the race. It has always been to finish it.

One of Satan's greatest weapons against the believer is discouragement. If he cannot persuade us to openly deny the Lord, he will often seek to wear us down little by little. He whispers that our prayers accomplish nothing, that our struggles will never end, that our failures define us, that God has forgotten us, and that giving up is easier than continuing.

Throughout history, many believers have found themselves in seasons of such deep sorrow that they questioned whether they could continue. Some have even reached the tragic point of taking their own lives because they believed the burden had become greater than they could bear.

Many of us have also discovered that our greatest struggles do not always come from strangers, but from those closest to us. We carry the burden of watching family members, friends, and loved

ones reject the truth, resist the commandments of God, or remain content with beliefs that cannot save them.

We grieve as some refuse to listen, some become offended, some separate themselves from us, and others begin to treat us as enemies simply because we desire to follow the Word of God. Some accuse us of being judgmental or hypocritical. Others mock our faith or refuse to speak with us altogether.

These wounds often cut deeper than persecution from the world because they come from the very people we love most.

The burden becomes even heavier because we do not merely disagree with them, we see the eternal danger they are in. We see many without hope, many trusting in traditions rather than truth, many blinded by pride, and many sincerely convinced they are walking the right path while unknowingly walking toward destruction. There are few sorrows greater than watching those we love reject the very message that could bring them life.

These burdens are real. The pain is real. The sicknesses are real. The aching body, the sleepless nights, the disappointments, the loneliness, and the constant spiritual battles are all real. Yet we must never allow sorrow to become despair, nor discouragement to become surrender. We cannot save another person's soul by carrying their burden beyond what God has called us to bear. Our responsibility is to love them, pray for them, speak the truth in love, live faithfully before them, and entrust them to the righteous Judge, whose wisdom, mercy, and justice are perfect.

Yet the Word of God continually points us in another direction.

Our hope has never rested in our circumstances.
Our hope rests in God.

Hope is strengthened by knowing the One in whom we trust. That knowledge does not come through feelings, emotions, or human opinions. It comes through diligently searching the Scriptures, learning the character of God, remembering His

promises, and fixing our eyes upon Christ. The more we know God, the greater our confidence becomes that He is faithful, even when we cannot understand His purposes.

Many have begun well. Some have stumbled and returned through repentance. Others have turned aside because they loved this present world more than the kingdom of God. Others have become weary under the weight of suffering and temptation. Yet the Holy Spirit continually calls the people of God to endure, to overcome, and to remain faithful until the end.

We see David fall grievously, yet return in repentance. We see Peter deny Christ, yet be restored. We see Demas forsake the work because he loved this present world. We see Judas overcome by remorse, ending his own life before ever turning back to the Lord for mercy. Each account teaches us something different, yet together they remind us that our greatest need is not merely to begin the Christian life, but to persevere in it.

The church must never become a place where those who struggle feel ashamed to ask for help. We are commanded to bear one another's burdens, encourage the fainthearted, strengthen the weak, restore those who have fallen, and continually point one another back to the Lord. None of us is meant to fight life's battles alone.

The disciple's life is not measured merely by how we begin, but by whether we remain faithful. The Scriptures continually exhort us to endure, to continue, to overcome, and to finish our course with faith. Every trial, every disappointment, every unanswered prayer, every rejection, every physical pain, and every burden becomes another opportunity either to draw closer to God or to allow discouragement to pull us away. Therefore, let us guard our hearts diligently, encouraging one another daily, lest any of us become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Perhaps today you are carrying burdens that no one else can see. Perhaps your body is failing you. Perhaps every morning begins with pain, and every night ends with exhaustion. Perhaps you have prayed for healing for years. Perhaps you have watched loved ones reject the truth, ridicule your faith, or walk farther away from God despite your tears and prayers.

Yet in those moments, we must ask ourselves some difficult questions.

Are we not worthy of giving ourselves every opportunity to finish the race?

Should we surrender the hope of eternal life when God has promised a crown to those who endure?

Is heaven not worth pressing forward one more day, one more hour, one more prayer?

Our desire to finish faithfully is not selfish. It is the very purpose for which God created and redeemed us.

And what of those around us?

If we give up, we also surrender the opportunities God has placed before us. We may never know how many souls the Lord intended us to encourage, strengthen, teach, comfort, or bring one step closer to Him. We may never know whose life would have been changed because we remained faithful through our own suffering. Every conversation, every act of kindness, every prayer, every faithful example may become the means by which another person begins seeking God. We are not responsible for whether others accept the truth, but we are responsible for remaining faithful so that the light God has placed within us continues to shine before them.

Most of all, we must ask the greatest question of all.

Is God not worthy?

Is He not worthy of our perseverance?

Is He not worthy of our faithfulness through pain, sickness, rejection, loneliness, misunderstanding, persecution, and suffering?

Is He not worthy if we are required to endure hardship until our final breath?

He has never abandoned His children. He has remained faithful in every generation. The Father gave His only begotten Son for our redemption, and Christ willingly endured the cross for the joy that was set before Him. If God has loved us with such perfect love, if Christ has endured such suffering to redeem us, should we not count Him worthy of our steadfast devotion?

No trial lasts forever. No suffering compares with the glory that shall be revealed. Every tear will one day be wiped away. Every faithful step taken in obedience, though unnoticed by the world, it is precious in the sight of God.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, do not give up.

Hold fast to the faith once delivered unto the saints. Encourage one another. Pray for one another. Bear one another's burdens. Continue in the Word of God. Fix your eyes upon Christ. Endure to the end.

For our God is worthy.

John, Your brother in Christ,
Zion's Roar Holy Spirit Ministry

Enduring to the End: Salvation Maintained by Faithfulness

There may come a point in your walk with God when continuing becomes harder than beginning ever was.

In the beginning, everything may have seemed clearer. You learned something new. You repented. You were baptized. You began changing your life. You separated yourself from things you once accepted. You became excited about Scripture. Maybe you thought that once you began obeying God, life would somehow become easier because you were finally doing what was right.

Then time passed and the excitement settled.

Some prayers were answered, while others seemed to remain unanswered. Some people supported your change, while others began pulling away. You discovered that obedience sometimes costs relationships. You learned that doing what is right does not prevent sickness, financial trouble, family conflict, temptation, disappointment, betrayal, loneliness, exhaustion, or grief. You may even have discovered that some of the hardest wounds come from people who also claim to love God.

Now the question is different.

It is no longer merely:
Will you begin?

It becomes:
Will you continue?

That question matters because Scripture never presents salvation as a race in which starting guarantees the finish.

Christ said:

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” **Matthew 24:13**

Those words should immediately cause us to examine something many churches rarely address. Why would Christ speak about enduring “unto the end” if the beginning alone settled everything permanently?

Why repeatedly warn disciples to continue, remain, overcome, endure, hold fast, and be faithful if nothing after the first profession of faith could place them in danger?

This is where the teaching commonly called “once saved, always saved” begins to collapse under the weight of Scripture. That doctrine gives many people the impression that once salvation begins, its final outcome can never again be affected by what a person does. Christ did not teach disciples to think that way. He warned them about falling away. He warned about deception. He warned about lawlessness causing love to grow cold. He warned His servants to remain faithful. The apostles repeated those warnings because they understood that the Christian life is not merely entered. It must be continued.

Hebrews 3:14 says: “*For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;*”

Notice the word “if”.

That word matters.

Scripture does not say, “We began confidently, therefore the ending no longer matters.” It says we are made partakers of Christ “if we hold” that confidence steadfast unto the end.

This study is therefore not asking whether you once believed. It is asking whether you are still following.

It is not asking whether you once repented.

It is asking whether repentance is still part of your life when sin is exposed.

It is not asking whether you once obeyed.
It is asking whether you continue obeying when obedience becomes expensive.

It is not asking whether you once loved God.
It is asking whether suffering, disappointment, correction, temptation, or time has changed that love.

That is the examination before us.

When Faith Stops Feeling New

There is something important about the difference between beginning and continuing. Beginning usually contains momentum. Continuing requires endurance.

A new believer may make enormous changes quickly because conviction is fresh. Old habits are exposed. Truth is being discovered. There may be excitement in finally understanding things that were hidden before. But eventually obedience becomes ordinary life. You still wake up tired. You still have responsibilities. You still experience weakness. The same Scriptures that once amazed you now require you to live them on days when you feel nothing remarkable at all.

This is where some people slowly begin to drift.
They do not necessarily wake up one morning and say, "I reject God."

It often happens more quietly. Prayer becomes less important, study becomes less frequent, and correction begins to feel irritating instead of helpful. Things that were once removed from the life begin returning little by little. The person may still believe, still identify as a Christian, and still attend fellowship, but something inside has changed. The urgency that once drove them

has weakened, and the fear of God no longer carries the same weight it once did.

Sin that once produced immediate repentance now begins receiving excuses, and obedience that once seemed necessary slowly starts feeling optional. This is why endurance must never be reduced to simply surviving horrible circumstances. Sometimes endurance is much quieter than that. Sometimes it means continuing to obey after obedience is no longer new, emotional, or exciting, and remaining faithful when the Christian life has become part of ordinary everyday living.

Christ said in **John 8:31**: *"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;"*

Notice the condition: "If ye continue." Discipleship is not measured only by what you received yesterday or by how strongly you once responded when truth was first revealed to you. It is revealed by what you continue in today.

So, examine yourself plainly. Are there things you once obeyed that you have slowly stopped taking seriously?

Are there convictions you once responded to immediately that you now explain away?

Have you become so familiar with Scripture that you have mistaken knowing what it says for actually remaining faithful to what it requires?

A person can know far more Bible today than they knew ten years ago and still be less obedient than they were ten years ago. Increased knowledge does not automatically mean increased faithfulness. Endurance is proven by continuing in the truth we have received and remaining obedient to it.

Trials Reveal What We Built Upon

It is easy to believe we are strong when nothing is testing us. A person can say, “I trust God,” while life is stable. They can say, “God is first,” while obedience costs nothing, and they can say, “I will never leave Him,” while everyone around them supports their faith. But those words are much easier to say before pressure comes.

Then something changes. A diagnosis comes. A marriage begins to struggle. A child walks away. A parent dies. Money becomes tight. Friends withdraw. People ridicule what you believe. Someone you trusted betrays you. Your body begins hurting every day. You pray, but the situation does not change. You do everything you know to do, and heaven still seems quiet. That is when the question becomes very real: “What now?”

This is where statements about faith must become actual faith. James wrote:

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” **James 1:2-4**

The trial itself does not automatically make a person stronger. James says patience must be allowed to have her perfect work. That means the same kind of suffering can produce very different results in two people. One person may draw closer to God, while another becomes bitter. Suffering may produce humility in one person and anger in another. Loss may cause one person to recognize what truly matters, while another begins blaming God for what was taken away.

The trial does not decide what you become. Your response to the trial does. This is why two people can experience almost the same suffering and come out completely different. One becomes softer before God, while the other becomes harder. One prays more, while the other slowly stops praying. One develops greater

compassion because of what they suffered, while the other becomes consumed with resentment.

Pressure has a way of revealing what was already developing inside the heart. Trials do not merely show us how strong we are. Very often, they expose where our faith is weak, where our trust depends upon circumstances, and where something inside us still needs to be surrendered to God.

What Happens When God Does Not Answer the Way You Expected?

This is one of the hardest places of endurance. You prayed. You believed. You asked other believers to pray with you. You searched yourself and repented where repentance was needed. You waited, sometimes for weeks, months, or even years, and yet what you asked for still did not happen. That is where many believers reach a difficult question: What now?

Some people unknowingly build their faith around expected outcomes. They trust God deeply as long as God does what they believe He should do. They pray for healing and expect healing. They pray for a relationship to be restored and expect restoration. They pray for a door to open, a family member to repent, suffering to end, or an opportunity to come, and they begin attaching their confidence in God to receiving that particular answer.

But what happens when the answer is not what you wanted? What happens when the person is not healed, the relationship is not restored, the opportunity does not come, the suffering continues, or the family member still refuses to repent? Does disappointment begin changing the way you see God, or does your faith remain anchored in who He is rather than in what you hoped He would do?

That is where the question must become personal: Would God still be worthy if the answer remained different from the one you wanted?

That question reaches into the center of endurance because mature faith cannot depend entirely upon circumstances turning out the way we hoped.

Habakkuk wrote: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Habakkuk 3:17-18

Habakkuk was not rejoicing because everything worked out. He described the opposite. The crops failed, the food supply disappeared, and the livestock were gone. Yet after describing all of that loss, he said, "Yet I will rejoice in the LORD." That word carries the heart of endurance. It acknowledges the disappointment without allowing disappointment to become greater than God.

There will be moments when life does not look the way you wanted it to look. Your prayer may not be answered the way you hoped. Your body may still hurt. Your family may still misunderstand you. A situation you believed God would change may remain exactly where it is. You may be deeply disappointed and still have to decide whether God is worthy.

Endurance begins to mature when obedience is no longer dependent upon receiving the outcome we wanted. Faith is tested most deeply when we can say that the situation is painful, the answer is difficult, and the loss is real, yet God remains worthy of our trust, obedience, and faithfulness.

When the People Closest to You Do Not Walk With You

Sometimes the hardest part of following God is not what the world does to you, but what happens inside your own home, your family, your friendships, or even among other believers. You may discover truth that someone you love refuses to hear. You may begin obeying something that makes other people uncomfortable. Someone may tell you that you have changed too much, accuse you of being extreme, call you judgmental, or say that you think you are better than everyone else simply because you no longer participate in things you now believe are wrong.

That kind of pressure can become incredibly lonely. Loneliness is not always the absence of people. Sometimes the deepest loneliness is being surrounded by people you love while realizing that nobody around you seems to understand the road you are trying to walk. You may still have people around you every day and yet feel that, spiritually, you are walking by yourself.

David knew that kind of pain. *He wrote: "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul."* **Psalm 142:4**

Paul knew it also. Near the end of his life he wrote: *"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me..."* **2 Timothy 4:16**

Those are not the words of men pretending human companionship does not matter. It did matter, and abandonment hurt. But Paul continued: *"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me..."* **2 Timothy 4:17**

Both things were true at the same time. People failed him, but God did not. Paul did not deny the pain of being forsaken, nor did he allow that pain to convince him that he had been completely abandoned.

This matters because loneliness can wear a disciple down in ways persecution sometimes cannot. When an enemy rejects you, you expect rejection. But when someone you love dismisses what matters most to you, the wound reaches deeper. Maybe you have spent years supporting other people's lives and discover very little interest when you need support.

Maybe you constantly help carry the burdens of others while rarely feeling that anyone notices yours. Maybe you attend fellowship surrounded by people and still leave feeling unknown. Those experiences are real, and they should not be dismissed as though a faithful disciple should never feel them.

The danger comes when another person's failure begins changing your own faithfulness. If they do not encourage you, will you stop obeying?

If they do not understand you, will you stop following?

If they reject the truth you share, will you allow bitterness to take root?

If nobody stands beside you for a season, will you still stand with God?

That is where loneliness becomes part of endurance. The question is not whether people should have supported you better. Sometimes they should have. The question is whether their failure will become strong enough to pull you away from the One who has not failed you.

When Loneliness Begins Talking to You

Loneliness becomes especially dangerous when it stops being only a feeling and begins becoming a voice. At first, you may simply recognize that you feel alone. But when that loneliness remains unresolved for a long time, thoughts begin attaching themselves to it. You start telling yourself that nobody cares, nobody understands, nothing will ever change, and eventually the questions become heavier: Why keep trying? Why continue serving people who do not seem to care about me? Why keep praying? Why keep going?

Those thoughts should not be ignored because they can become the beginning of withdrawal. A person may stop speaking because speaking feels pointless. They may stop asking for help because previous attempts left them disappointed. They may stop attending fellowship because they feel disconnected, or stop investing in relationships because disappointment begins to feel inevitable. The loneliness itself may have been painful, but now the response to it is creating even more distance.

Eventually loneliness can turn into isolation, and isolation gives discouragement room to speak without correction. That is why Hebrews says: *“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”* **Hebrews 3:13**

Hardening usually does not happen all at once. A person may not recognize it while it is developing. Yesterday's hurt can become today's resentment, and today's resentment can become tomorrow's distance. The person may still say they love God, still believe, and still identify as a disciple, while something in the heart is slowly becoming colder and less willing to trust, listen, forgive, or receive help.

This is one reason God did not design His people to walk entirely alone. Other believers do not replace God, and they never should. But God has still chosen to strengthen His people through one another. There will be times when you need someone else to

remind you of what you already know, to encourage you when discouragement has become louder than truth, or simply to stand beside you while you regain your strength. There will also be times when somebody else needs you to do the same for them.

The Danger of Bitterness

One of the most dangerous things about suffering is that you can be completely right about what someone did to you and still become wrong in what you allow that suffering to produce. That is worth understanding carefully, because bitterness does not require an imaginary wound. People sometimes use the word **bitter** as though it means nothing serious actually happened, but that is not true. Bitterness can grow from very real betrayal, abuse, disappointment, neglect, or injustice.

Hebrews 12:15 warns: *“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;”*

The wound may have been somebody else's doing, but the root that begins growing inside you becomes your responsibility. You may not have chosen what happened, and you may have had no control over the harm another person caused, but you still have to decide what happens next inside your own heart.

If somebody betrayed you, will that betrayal become hatred? If someone rejected you, will rejection become revenge? If someone disappointed you, will disappointment become unbelief? If somebody else failed to obey God, will their failure eventually produce disobedience in you?

These are difficult questions, but they matter because the person who hurt you will answer to God for what they did, and you will answer for what you allowed that hurt to produce in you.

Endurance requires learning how to carry real wounds without allowing those wounds to become the reason we abandon faithfulness.

Correction Is Also a Trial

There is another form of endurance many people overlook, and that is correction. It is often easier to endure an enemy because you already believe the enemy is wrong. It becomes much harder when Scripture reveals that ****you**** are wrong. What happens when God confronts something you enjoy, exposes a behavior you have defended, or proves that a teaching you have believed for many years is false? What happens when someone corrects you and, after searching the Scriptures, you discover that the correction was right?

At that point the real question is whether you will repent or become offended. **Proverbs 15:10** says: *“Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.”*

That warning is serious. A person can continue attending fellowship, reading Scripture, and identifying as a disciple while resisting every correction God sends into their life. That is not endurance. It is stubbornness wearing religious clothing. Endurance includes remaining teachable and allowing God to continue changing you after the first stages of your walk with Him.

A disciple who refuses correction eventually stops growing. Worse, a person who repeatedly rejects correction can become so hardened that they begin interpreting their own resistance as faithfulness. That is why self-examination must continue throughout the Christian life. The longer we follow God, the more dangerous it becomes to assume that experience, knowledge, or years in the faith mean there is nothing left to correct. The moment a person becomes convinced that God has nothing more to expose, remove, or change in them is the moment they become especially vulnerable to self-deception.

Temptation Does Not End Because You Became a Disciple

Some believers become discouraged because they assumed certain temptations would disappear after conversion. Then the temptation returns. An old addiction begins calling again. An old relationship reappears. Sexual temptation returns. Anger rises again. Pride resurfaces. Greed appears in another form. The believer may feel ashamed that the struggle still exists and begin wondering whether the temptation itself means they have already failed.

But temptation is not the same as surrender. The question is what you do when temptation appears. **James 1:12** says: *“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”*

Notice again the connection between endurance and the crown of life. Scripture does not say the faithful man is the one who is never tempted. It says he ***endureth temptation***. There may be battles you have to fight more than once. There may be temptations you have to reject repeatedly, situations you have to flee, and weaknesses you must learn not to underestimate.

Sometimes remaining faithful requires more than saying, “I will try harder next time.” You may have to remove people, applications, habits, possessions, or environments that continually draw you back toward sin. That is not weakness. It is recognizing the value of your soul and refusing to make provision for the very thing that repeatedly threatens your obedience. What would be foolish is knowing where you continually fall and still choosing to stand at the edge of the same cliff.

Christ used severe language concerning sin when He said: *“And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee...”* **Matthew 5:29**

The point is the seriousness with which anything leading us toward sin must be treated. We should not protect what repeatedly threatens our faithfulness simply because removing it is inconvenient, painful, or costly. Endurance sometimes requires changing the conditions that continually lead toward failure.

Nothing you possess, no relationship you are afraid to lose, no habit you enjoy, and no temporary pleasure is worth losing eternal life.

What Happens When You Fall?

Endurance does not mean that a disciple never stumbles. Scripture gives us clear examples of men who failed badly. David sinned grievously, and Peter denied Christ. Their failures were serious, but the difference was not that they had never fallen. The difference was what happened afterward.

Peter wept bitterly and returned. David confessed his sin before God. ***Psalm 51*** does not sound like a man defending himself, minimizing what he did, or looking for excuses. It sounds like a man broken by the reality of his sin and desperate to be restored. He prayed: *“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”* ***Psalm 51:10***

Now compare that with Judas. Judas also regretted what happened. He returned the money and admitted that innocent blood had been betrayed. But remorse and repentance are not the same thing. One man turned back toward God, while the other surrendered to despair and ended his life. That difference matters greatly in a study about endurance because some people begin to believe that once they have failed badly enough, there is no reason to continue.

But that is exactly when continuing matters most. If you sinned, repent. If you fell, get up. If you wandered, return. If your heart

became cold, recognize it and turn back before that coldness develops into something worse. The enemy would love for you to believe that because you failed yesterday, obedience today no longer matters. Scripture teaches the opposite.

Proverbs 24:16 says: *“For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again...”*

The righteous man is not described as someone who never fell. He is described as someone who rose again. Perseverance should never be confused with perfection. A disciple may stumble, but endurance is revealed in the refusal to remain down, in the willingness to repent, return, and continue walking faithfully with God.

Some People Do Walk Away

We must also reject another dangerous assumption: that every person who begins will automatically finish. Scripture gives us examples of people who did not continue faithfully. Paul wrote concerning Demas: *“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world...”* **2 Timothy 4:10**

Demas had participated in ministry and had been among believers, yet something eventually became more valuable to him than continuing faithfully. Paul explains it plainly: “having loved this present world.” That should cause every disciple to examine what still competes with God inside the heart.

What would be difficult for you to surrender if obedience required it?

What comfort could eventually pull you away?

Is there a relationship with enough influence over you that you might compromise truth in order to keep it?

Is there a possession, desire, fear, ambition, or pleasure that could become more important to you than remaining faithful?

People do not usually abandon God because they suddenly decide that eternity has no value. More often, something else becomes more valuable in the moment. The present world begins to feel more immediate than the kingdom of God, and temporary comfort begins to outweigh eternal consequences.

That is why Christ warned: *“No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”* **Luke 9:62**

Looking back usually begins before turning back. The heart starts remembering what was left behind. The cost of obedience begins feeling heavier, while the old life begins to look better than it really was. Things God once exposed as harmful, sinful, or empty can slowly be remembered with affection instead of warning.

That is why a disciple must be careful not to romanticize what God called them away from. When the old life begins to look attractive again, do not only remember what you enjoyed. Remember why you left it. Remember what it produced. Remember what God showed you. Endurance requires continuing forward even when the things behind you begin calling your heart back.

Weariness Is Not the Same as Unfaithfulness

There will also be times when you are simply tired, and that matters. Elijah reached a place of extraordinary exhaustion after tremendous spiritual conflict. After confronting the prophets of Baal and witnessing God's power, he later sat under a juniper tree and asked that he might die.

1 Kings 19:4 says: *“But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die...”*

Notice what happened next. God did not immediately respond to Elijah's exhaustion with a long rebuke. Elijah needed rest. He needed food. He needed strength. Only after those needs were addressed did God continue dealing with him.

Sometimes believers spiritualize exhaustion until they become ashamed of being human. But there are times when you may genuinely need sleep, help, support, or simply enough honesty to admit that the load has become too heavy to carry alone. Pretending to be fine when you are not does not make you stronger, and asking for help does not automatically make you weak.

Galatians 6:2 says: *“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”*

If Scripture commands believers to bear one another's burdens, then admitting that you have a burden cannot automatically be a sign of weakness. The church should never become a place where people are afraid to admit that they are struggling because everyone around them is pretending not to struggle.

At the same time, weariness must not become surrender. Rest when rest is needed. Ask for help when the burden is too heavy. Pray. Allow trustworthy believers to help carry what you cannot carry alone. Regain strength where strength has been depleted, and then continue. Endurance does not require pretending you are

never tired. It requires refusing to let exhaustion become the reason you stop walking with God.

You Are Also Responsible for the Disciple Beside You

There is another side to endurance that is easily missed. This study is not only about how “you” survive your own trials. It is also about whether you are helping anyone else survive theirs. The Christian life was never designed to be a collection of people struggling separately while everyone assumes the others are fine.

Look around you carefully. Someone may be closer to giving up than you realize. The person who always jokes may be deeply discouraged. The one who rarely asks for help may desperately need it. The strong person everyone depends upon may have nobody checking on them because everyone assumes strength means they do not need support. Someone may sit beside you during fellowship and feel completely alone. Another may be fighting temptation they are ashamed to mention, caring for a sick family member and barely sleeping, struggling through a marriage nobody knows is falling apart, losing hope over a child, or dealing with financial pressure while saying nothing.

The question is whether you would notice. **Romans 12:15** says: *“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.”*

That kind of obedience requires involvement. You cannot truly weep with someone whose life you never take the time to know. You cannot help carry a burden you never bothered to ask about. Sometimes the greatest need is not another sermon, another correction, or another explanation. Sometimes a disciple needs someone to notice that they are tired.

Hebrews 10:24 says: *“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:”*

To “consider one another” means we must think about one another, pay attention, ask questions, and listen. We should not assume that because someone arrived at fellowship, smiled, read Scripture, participated, and went home that everything is fine. Outward participation can hide inward exhaustion.

The body of Christ should be one of the places where endurance is strengthened. A believer should be able to find prayer there, encouragement there, correction when needed, and support when the burden becomes heavy. You may never know whether one conversation, one prayer, one visit, one phone call, or one sincere question helped another disciple keep going when they were close to giving up.

Do Not Make Permanent Decisions in Temporary Despair

Pain has a way of making the present feel permanent. When someone has suffered for a long time, the mind can begin speaking as though today's pain has already decided tomorrow. Thoughts such as, "Nothing will change," "This will always be my life," or "There is no reason to continue" can begin to feel like facts instead of reactions to suffering.

That is one of the dangers of prolonged pain. It narrows our vision until we begin judging the future only by what we can see in the present. But you do not know tomorrow. You do not know what God may change, what you may understand a year from now that you cannot understand today, who may enter your life, what prayer may still be answered, or what opportunity may exist beyond the trial that currently feels endless.

This is why despair is such a dangerous counselor. Despair takes today's pain and claims authority over tomorrow. It tells you that because you cannot see a way forward, there is no way forward. But pain does not have the right to determine the future, and neither should despair be allowed to make decisions for you.

Psalm 30:5 says: "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

That verse does not tell us how long the night will feel. Some nights last far longer than we expected, and some seasons of suffering do not end quickly. But the point remains the same: the night is not forever. No matter how permanent pain may feel while you are inside it, it is still not eternity.

Salvation Is Worth Fighting For

There may come moments when you have to remind yourself what is actually at stake. The issue is not ultimately your comfort, your reputation, whether everybody understands you, or whether life has treated you fairly. The issue is eternal life.

Christ said: “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Mark 8:36

Turn that question around and make it personal. What trial is worth losing your soul over? What disappointment, relationship, temptation, offense, suffering, unanswered prayer, or moment of exhaustion is worth surrendering eternal life? That question does not make your suffering small. It simply places your present suffering beside eternity and forces you to remember which one carries the greater weight.

Paul wrote: *“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”*

Romans 8:18

Paul did not speak as a man unfamiliar with suffering. He had been beaten, rejected, imprisoned, persecuted, and abandoned. He knew what it meant to suffer deeply, yet when he placed present suffering beside the glory that awaited the faithful, he said there was no comparison. Sometimes endurance requires us to look beyond what hurts today and remember what we are fighting to receive.

Once Saved, Always Saved Cannot Survive These Warnings

At this point we must ask something directly. If final salvation could never be lost after a person once received it, why does Scripture repeatedly warn believers to endure unto the end, hold fast, continue, resist deception, avoid becoming hardened, overcome, and remain faithful unto death? Those warnings would lose much of their meaning if the final outcome were already guaranteed regardless of whether the believer continued faithfully.

Yet Scripture never treats those warnings as empty language.

Hebrews 10:38 says: *“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”*

Then verse 39 says: *“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”*

The contrast is difficult to ignore. Drawing back is connected with perdition, while continuing in faith is connected with the saving of the soul. That is why endurance matters. Scripture does not present salvation as something a person earns through human merit, but neither does it teach that faithfulness, obedience, repentance, and continuation have become unnecessary once salvation begins.

Grace does not remove the need for endurance. Grace makes faithful endurance possible. The danger of once-saved-always-saved thinking is that it can teach a believer to treat warnings given for the protection of the soul as though those warnings cannot truly apply to them. A person may read commands to continue, overcome, remain faithful, and avoid falling away while assuming that failure to do those things could never affect their final salvation.

That is a dangerous way to read Scripture. A warning only protects the person who believes the warning is real enough to obey.

Examine Where You Are Now

Do not finish this study by thinking only about everybody else. Bring the examination back to yourself. Are you stronger in obedience today than you were when you began, or have you slowly become comfortable?

What trial currently has the greatest ability to wear you down?

Has suffering made you bitter?

Has loneliness caused you to isolate yourself?

Has correction made you defensive?

Has temptation convinced you that eventually you are going to surrender anyway?

Examine the areas that may be harder to admit. Have unanswered prayers caused you to doubt God's worthiness?

Are you tired and pretending that you are not?

Is there a sin you keep returning to because you have not removed what continually leads you toward it?

Have you begun looking backward toward things God already called you out of?

Have you started believing that because you once obeyed, continued obedience is somehow less necessary now?

Perhaps the most important question is this: "If your present circumstances never became exactly what you wanted, would you still remain faithful to God?"

Do not answer that quickly. Would God still be worthy if your body remained weak, if some family members never accepted the truth, if people misunderstood you, if following Him remained

lonely, if obedience continued costing you, or if some prayers were answered differently than you expected?

That question reaches deeply because it reveals whether our faithfulness depends upon God Himself or upon the life we hoped He would give us. If the answer is yes, if God would still be worthy even when circumstances remain difficult, then that answer must become something we live and not merely something we say.

Finish

Paul knew he was approaching the end of his life when he wrote: *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness..."* **2 Timothy 4:7-8**

Notice what Paul celebrated. He did not merely look back and say that he had started well. He said that he had "finished his course" and "kept the faith". That is the goal of every disciple. Beginning matters, but the race is not completed at the starting line.

There will be days when continuing feels easy, and there will be other days when continuing itself becomes an act of faith. You may have to continue while grieving, hurting, misunderstood, tempted, lonely, corrected, or waiting. You may have to continue after falling and repenting, when others walk away, when the world you once loved calls you back, or when your own emotions tell you that you are exhausted.

Continue because YHWH and Christ are worthy. Continue because eternal life is worth more than the temporary relief of surrender. Continue because there is a crown promised to those who remain faithful. Do not assume that yesterday's faithfulness guarantees tomorrow's. Guard what God has given you, examine yourself honestly, repent quickly when needed, hold fast to the truth, and help the disciple beside you do the same.

Whatever trial presently stands between you and the finish line, do not allow it to become greater in your heart than the One who called you. Christ said: *"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."* **Matthew 24:13**

The command is not merely to begin the race. It is to remain faithful until the race is complete.

Finish it.

Do Not Keep This Message to Yourself

If this study has caused you to examine the Scriptures more carefully, do not keep that examination to yourself.

Truth spreads when it is shared.

Consider passing this booklet to someone who may also need to ask these same questions.

You may:

- Give this booklet to a friend or family member
 - Request additional copies
 - Leave it where others may discover it
- Share it with someone seeking biblical truth

The apostles did not hide the truth. They proclaimed it openly so that others could hear, examine, and respond.

You can do the same.

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TEST EVERYTHING BY SCRIPTURE

Do not believe this booklet because you have read it.

Open your Bible.

Search the Scriptures.

Examine every claim carefully.

The Bereans were called noble because they searched the Scriptures daily to verify whether those things were true.

Follow their example.

If what is written here is true, it will stand when tested.

If it is false, it should be rejected.

NEED HELP?

You were not meant to walk this path alone.

If you have questions, need clarification, or would like help working through these studies, reach out.

We will study the Scriptures with you, step by step, so that what you learn is clear, proven, and grounded in the Word of God.

If what you believe is true, it will stand.

If it is not, it must fall.

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